

LSU | Staff Senate

MEETING MINUTES July 17, 2024

President Olivia Phelps presided over the July 17, 2024; Staff Senate meeting held in the Event Room on the Second Floor of the Barnes & Noble Bookstore at LSU at 10:30 a.m.

Unclassified

Executive/Administrative/Managerial
P - Tammy Millican ('27)

Professional/Non-Faculty
P – Blanchard, Debbie ('27)
A - Bonner, Amber ('26)
P – Bonnette, Michael ('27)
P - Breaux, Kevin ('25)
A - Canady, Robyn ('26)
P - Carney, Mo ('27)
Pr - Duplechain, Joshua ('25)
P – Faulkner, Carli ('27)
Pr – Franks, Stephenie ('25)
P - Guttner, Ginger ('25)
A - Jeffcoat, Danielle ('26)
P - Kennison, Jennifer ('25)
P - Martin-Whitaker, Neely ('25)
P - McDonald, Quinneka ('27)
P - Mimms, Anissa ('26)
P - Oster, Anthony ('24)
A - Owens, Jace ('26)
P - Phelps, Olivia ('26)
P - Smith, Henri ('27)
A - Washington, Valori ('26)
P - Waters, Bradley ('26)
P - White, Dayton ('25)
Pr - Williamson, Jeannie ('26)
P – Wilson, Derek ('27)
P - Yarbro, Skylar ('26)

Classified

Skilled Crafts
P - Constance, Taylor ('25)

Technical/Paraprofessional
A - Matkovic, Igor ('26)

Clerical/Secretarial
P – Butler, Whitney ('25)
P - Jensen, Jerri ('26)
P - Smith, Celeste ('26)

Service/Maintenance
A - Robertson, Winkeyssa ('27)

P - Indicates Present
Pr - Indicates Proxy
A - Indicates Absent
A/P – indicates Absence not Counted

GUESTS:

Deanna Gresham, Residential Life
Casey Muller, College of Engineering
Zacki Soliman, Campus Federal Credit Union
Casey Coughlin, Campus Federal Credit Union

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Olivia Phelps at 10:30 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

There was a quorum with three proxies noted.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Senator Jace Owens led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – June 19, 2024, Staff Senate Meeting

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Secretary Bradley Waters. The motion, seconded by Treasurer Henri Smith, carried.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

President Olivia Phelps gave her Presidential Address during the first meeting of her term which reads:

“Welcome to the 2024-25 LSU Staff Senate term. For those I have not met before, I am Olivia Phelps, your President for this term. I hope you're ready for a dose of authenticity, a hint of realism, a little laughter, and a lot of inspiration, because together, we're about to embark on an exciting journey. I know I have some very big shoes to fill, and my one-liners may not be quite up to par with Josh's... but I'll try to not be too boring and keep y'all awake.

I would like to extend my sincerest welcome to our returning and newly elected Senators. I delighted am to see so many of you here. Your presence is crucial, and not just because the more, the merrier! Being here means you're committed to making our institution a better place for all our staff members. It's like they always say: “Showing up is half the battle!” And hey, who doesn't love winning battles with friends by their side? I am thrilled that you all have chosen to answer the call to support our staff through advocacy, awareness, and appreciation. This is no small whisper you answered, but rather a chant that has been growing louder for the nearly 50 years that Staff Senate has been in existence.

I began my journey with Staff Senate nearly 3 years ago, I started coming for "market research" for my role in HRM. I wanted to see what this was all about - what y'all were providing to staff that we didn't know about, how we could work with you to provide more, and what ways my office and SS could work together to improve our institution. What I found was not only the most dedicated and hardworking

group of people, but they were so welcoming and fun to boot! Shortly after, a little bird nominated me to fill a vacant seat and now here we are today.

I said in my speech for the Presidency that I was running because someone asked me to show up. They asked me to participate and take a seat at the table of first the senators, and then asked me to run for the role of president. But the very first step was simply showing up. Showing up sounds so easy... but it shouldn't be taken lightly. It is the first step. The foundation to everything after that initial decision. If you don't show up, you forfeit your seat at the table and your voice in the future. For the next year, I will be asking you all to show up in various ways. Both literally and figurately.

There's been a lot of talk about engagement recently both in the workforce in general but also at LSU. It's not just a buzzword we toss around to sound important. Engagement is the bedrock of everything we aim to accomplish. When we show up, when we're attentive, when we truly listen to one another, we create a culture where everyone feels valued and included. Think of it as the secret ingredient in our recipe for success—like the chocolate chips in the cookie dough of collaboration. And we need more chocolate chips. We need more people to be involved with Staff Senate. Not just as senators, but working with our committees and coming to meetings, if simply to be knowledgeable about what we do and what is going on around campus. Knowledge is power and there is strength in numbers. We need both to continue to grow the work and influence of Staff senate across campus.

We know there's no substitute for hard work. And we do have some work ahead of us! But here's the good news: we're not doing it alone. Each of you brings unique strengths and perspectives, and together, we form an unstoppable force. Whether we're tackling issues big or small, our combined efforts make a real difference. The accomplishments of the past few years prove that we are stronger together. We saw parental leave (FINALLY) come to pass. We've seen merit raises, and improvements in communication and staff inclusion in leadership matters and (will someday VERY SOON) see fees waived. We've already accomplished so much in the past couple years... Picture us as a team of superheroes—minus the capes unless you've got one in your closet! In which case, I've got a job for you at Holiday on Campus.

Our collective voice is our superpower. Individually, we can move mountains; together, we can move the entire university. When we show up, speak up for what's right, and advocate for our fellow staff members, we amplify our impact. It's like the difference between a single trumpet and a full brass band—powerful, harmonious, impossible to ignore, and a joy to be a part of.

Here's to showing up, bringing a friend, engaging fully, working hard, and using our collective voice to make a difference. We've got a bright future ahead, but it's up to us to shape it. As my favorite creator, Walt Disney, once said "The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing."

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Olivia Phelps mentioned that there have been no official meetings outside of the Executive Committee Meeting that was held on July 10.

NEW BUSINESS

Staff Senator Appointments

The Staff Senate Executive Committee has approved the following appointments.

Deanna Gresham, who works in Residential Life, was the next runner-up from the last general election and has expressed an interest in staying involved on the Staff Senate. She has been employed at LSU since 2020. Deanna is filling a vacancy in the Professional/Non-Faculty Unclassified Category through 2027.

Casey Muller who works in the College of Engineering has been helping Staff Senate behind the scenes with graphic designing for about a year or so. He has expressed an interest in joining the Staff Senate in more of an official capacity. Casey has been employed at LSU since December 2005. He is filling a vacancy in the Professional/Non-Faculty Unclassified Category through 2026.

Committee/Liaison Assignments

President Phelps announced that the Executive Committee has drafted a survey to be distributed to the full Senate for interests and committee choices which will include information for the Mentor/Mentee Program. Once the survey is completed, the committee membership will be outlined for the year.

Member-at-Large Tammy Millican and President-Elect Quinneka McDonald will be Co-Chairing the Long-Range Review and Planning Committee who will lead the review of LSU Staff Senate's Strategic Plan due to an expiration date of 2025 as well as some bylaws review for revisions.

Staff Senate Budget/Gift Fund

Treasurer Henri Smith provided a written financial report for July that was included in the meeting packet for Senate review. She mentioned the Staff Senate Gift Fund guidelines and criteria that is used to recognize Senator's life events that may happen throughout the year. Senators were asked to contribute \$20 each to the fund for the year. Venmo and Cash App options are available, if needed.

Senator Portraits/Placards/Name Tags

Staff Senate Administrative Coordinator Melonie Milton announced that if anyone needs a professional photographed headshot for the Staff Senate website, Past-President Joshua Duplechain can help take one with his college and can schedule. Please let us know if you would like to schedule.

Melonie Milton also announced that the Staff Senate has provided Door Placards for newly elected Senators that will be distributed during the next meeting. Also, if anyone needs an LSU name badge, please include your interest on the survey.

Staff Senate Apparel

Melonie Milton announced that the Staff Senate will open orders online for Staff Senate apparel through the Red Stick Sports Website this year. There will be some different choices available. Items can be shipped directly to those who place an order. The link to order will be sent out soon.

Future Guest Speakers

If anyone has any suggestions, please send those to the Executive Committee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Olivia Phelps reported that the Staff Senate Presidency position has been granted a stipend of \$6,000 per year from the Provost Office. Many peer institutions have this type of stipend in place for their staff governance organizations. Thank you to Past-President Joshua Duplechain for advocating for this change.

Phelps also announced her new job title with regards to the Presidency position due to her new classification as an Instructor with the AgCenter.

Per the LSU Staff Senate Bylaws:

Article I: Election to Staff Senate Membership
D. Vacancies

3. A Senator whose EEO/job category changes may complete the term to which he or she was elected. Such EEO/job category changes will not constitute vacancies during the current term.

Per the Constitution:

Article III Organization Section
1: Representation

Other Academic Employees: Other academic employees include part-time members of the academic staff and full-time members of the academic staff below the rank of instructor, or equivalent. Employees with academic responsibilities who do not hold faculty rank are also included in this classification.

The Executive Committee agrees for her to complete her Presidency.

New Member Orientation

President Olivia Phelps announced that a New Member Orientation will be presented immediately following today's meeting with lunch provided by Campus Federal Credit Union.

Move In Day

President Phelps announced that student move in day is scheduled from August 16-18. She encouraged Senators to help during that time. She circulated a sign-up sheet for participation.

Welcome Week is also being planned and our assistance with volunteering may be needed as well. That information will be sent out to the full senate once it is available.

Staff Senator Birthday

Staff Senator July Birthdays:

- Senator Mo Carney celebrated his birthday on July 6.
- Past-President Joshua Duplechain will celebrate his birthday on July 18.
- Senator Debbie Blanchard will celebrate her birthday on July 28.
- Senator Ginger Guttner will celebrate her birthday on July 30.

Happy Birthday!

MOTION TO ADJOURN – With there being no more business, Member-at-Large Tammy Millican made a motion to adjourn. The motion, seconded by Senator Dayton White, carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Bradley Waters, Secretary

BW/mm